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TAGS: [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [UN](#) [RP](#)
SUBJECT: NEW PHILIPPINE PERMREP TO UN

¶1. (U) President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on January 14 swore in retired Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario "Jun" G. Davide, Jr. as the new Philippine permanent representative to the United Nations in New York., replacing Ambassador Baja. He follows in the footsteps of Supreme Court Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee, whom then-President Corazon Aquino appointed as the Philippine permanent representative to the UN in 1988.

¶2. (SBU) Comment: Justice Davide's nomination sparked some controversy, with critics claiming it was a "payback" for his favorable ruling on the "constructive resignation" of then-President Estrada in 2001 that led to then-Vice President Arroyo assuming the Presidency after the "EDSA 2" people power movement. The President chose to sidestep the Congressional Commission on Appointments with this swearing in during the Christmas Congressional recess, perhaps to avoid a partisan debate on the alleged political aspects of the nomination, as well as his age. However, Davide is viewed by most knowledgeable Filipinos as an honorable individual and an effective Chief Justice, who helped shape the judiciary's internal reform programs. President Arroyo had also entrusted him with a review of and recommendations for electoral reform after his retirement, but his report has never become public. The Embassy, in particular USAID, worked closely with Justice Davide and his staff on both judicial and electoral reform, and found him intelligent, courtly, and friendly toward the United States. His lack of familiarity with international diplomacy and the work of the United Nations will likely make him a less pro-active representative than his predecessor and more apt to follow guidance from Manila (when it is available). End Comment.

¶3. (U) Bio notes:
Born: December 20, 1935, Cebu province (Central Visayas)
Education: University of the Philippines (Associate in Arts 1955, Bachelor of Science in Jurisprudence 1958, Bachelor of Laws 1959)
Work experience:
-- 1998-2005 Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
-- 1991-1998 Associate Justice of the Supreme Court
-- 1989-1991 Chairman of the Presidential Fact Finding Commission
-- 1988-1990 Chairman of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC)
-- 1986 Commissioner of the Constitutional Convention
-- 1978-1984 Member of Congress (Minority Floor Leader)
-- 1962-1968 Faculty Member of Southwestern University, Cebu City
-- 1959-1963 Private Secretary in the Governor's office, Cebu province
Awards: Numerous, including Magsaysay Award for Government Service 2002
Spouse: Virginia Jimenea Perez
Children: Hilario III, Joseph Bryan Hilary, Sheryl Ann, Noreen, Delster Emmanuel
Religion: Catholic (Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus)
Languages: English, Tagalog
KENNEY